that. I've got too much character and will power." And so, to test his "will power," he does drink. The same thing holds true in drama making. Unless you point out to your audience the good example at the end, you will not succeed in your pu.pose.

I am a great believer in the "uplift" quality in plays, and cannot impress this strongly enough on the minds of anybody who has the inclination for playwriting. When I write a play, there are always two persons in my mind,—the girl and her "fellow" who sit in the balcony and, after they have paid for their seats, have only about half a dollar left to buy something to eat and then a lonely dime for carfare back home. When that couple leave the theater, I want the girl to hug her beau's arm tighter than she ever hugged it before in all her life, and I want her to go out into the night believing with him that goodness and love are the greatest things in all the world, and that money means nothing. That's the sort of "uplift" I mean. I strive for it always. I want that girl and her beau, as well as the young women and their escorts in the orchestra chairs below, to feel that money is nothing in the world's scheme of things; that the best things in the world, the air, the sun, the moon, the stars, that all of these are free. I want them to leave the theater feeling that all these things are theirs to enjoy, and that love will help them realize the beauty, the splendor, the unapproachable glory, of them. And I want them to learn this through laughter, not through the troubled frown of having beheld a dark and ugly picture. They shall learn it positively, from seeing it exploited, demonstrated on the stage; not negatively, by seeing the reverse pictured. And the playwright who does this stands the far, far greater chance for success. Of this I am sure.

A "rule" often laid down by the curriculum guides for young playwrights has to do with "care in the working out of their ideas; precision; laborious application; polishing"; et cetera, et cetera. To all of which, as a "rule," I say, "Piffle!" As soon as a young playwright gets hold of a good new smashing story, let him grab hold of a pencil and a big wad of paper, let him seat himself in front of that pencil and that wad of paper, and let him write his story in dramatic form as best he knows how. Mind you, he has got to have the "instinct" I spoke of, in the first place. Let him tell his story any way he wants to. Let him forget every didactic rule he ever heard. He may succeed, and he may not; but, in the latter event, "rules" could not have possibly had anything to do with saving him. Good drama is not mechanical.

I wrote "Alias Jimmy Valentine" in exactly four days—and took plenty of time for my meals too. My latest play, "In the Deep Purple," was completed in collaboration with Wilson Mizner in exactly three days. Many a good play, I believe, has been spoiled by too much tinkering and puttering. If a play is good, it is good at the beginning; if it is not, all the polishing in the world is not going to help it or make it a whit better.

Another Recommendation

SPECIFICALLY, there is only one thing I believe inevitably necessary to a good play, and this one thing—again mind you—I do not mean to suggest as a "rule." I simply say that I do it, and that it is a pretty good thing to have lying around. I believe, then, that you must fashion at least one big scene between two of the characters in your play. I do not think there is any positive point in the play's action where you can say, "This scene must come,"—it may come at any time,—but I believe you have got to have it somewhere in the play. Make this scene a hummer, that's the main requirement. If the se is a thrilling one, you may feel pretty safe abo.. he rest of the play.

Finally, let me repeat again that it is my deep conviction that no one, no matter who or what he may be, can lay down definite rules for playwriting. If you have the dramatic instinct, honestly feel that you have it, go ahead and do your best in the way that instinct points out to you. If you have not got the instinct, go back to work at your old job.

Speaking of rules, I want to tell you a little story before I stop. When my first and only partly successful play was put on, the editor of one of the leading theatrical journals in this country criticized it as "revealing no knowledge of dramatic construction or sound knowledge of the rudiments of playwriting." When my next play was put on three months later with entire success, the same editor wrote me a note asking me to write an article for his publication on the very subject he had said a short time before that I knew absolutely nothing about.

I do not know exactly what this anecdote is intended to prove; but it seems to me that buried in it somewhere are several facts that are interesting and vital to the present article. It may show that had I written the desired article—which assuredly I did not—many who might have read it might have accepted my utterances as "rules." It may show that the editor believed I had learned all about the "rules of drama making" in a month or two. It may show the hypocrisy of the whole game of laying down rules for budding dramatists. It may—but, oh, well, what's the use? There never were, there are not, and there never will be, any clearly defined regulations for the molding of successful plays. Suggestions once in awhile that may help a bit, yes; but "rules," never! The "rules" that govern playwriting are the "rules" that govern a rough and tumble fight in the dark.

WHO WAS BELLE CARILLON

A NEW YORK ARABIAN NIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENT

VIII. THE ST. PAUL BUILDING

By GELETT BURGESS

FENTON'S mind was busy with her as he walked down Broadway. Belle Carillon! Surely she was worth conjecture. Belle Carillon! The two glimpses he had had of her, the few words they had exchanged, had fanned the flame of fancy that her portrait had first ignited. Her whimsical face, her graceful, expressive hands, her lithe, slim figure, something in the quality of her warm, fresh, olive skin, made him feel actually weak when he thought of her. He confessed to himself that he was pretty far gone. Belle Carillon! Belle Carillon! He wanted her more than anything on earth. But meanwhile he had to go through what he had planned to do. A wild goose chase, no doubt; but he would follow it to a finish.

He finally reached the entrance of the St. Paul Building, a three-hundred-foot pile of granite carved into Romanesque shapes, and had turned in to enter, when he saw a man waiting in a doorway he had just passed. Fenton stopped and took a second look at him—a muscular man in a brown derby hat and a shepherd's plaid suit! There was no possible doubt of it; it was the same man he had first seen in Scheffel Hall with the outline of a revolver bulging from his hip pocket; it was the same man he had caugh: a quick glimpse of in the lobby of the Hotel Plaza. Here was another puzzle! Was he being followed, and, if so, why? A mad night, indeed! How would it end?

He went in, struggling with this new problem, looked at the directory tablet on the wall, and found the name of "Nallery & Co." Opposite was the number of the firm's office, 1376. Only one of the three elevators was running. In the car a negro boy was sitting on a stool, reading "Middlemarch." Fenton entered.

"Thirteenth floor," he said, and the boy reluctantly closed his book, slammed the door, and pulled back the controller. The elevator shot up.

"Round on the left," said the boy as Fenton emerged, and the car descended.

Fenton walked round a corner of the corridor and came pointblank to a door painted with the name of "Nallery & Co., Mining Brokers." There he knocked. He had no idea what he should do when the door was opened; he had made no plan. He would make up his mind what part to play as soon as the situation was found. Meanwhile, as he waited, he thought he heard a hurried sound of feet, the soft click of a closed door. He listened now more carefully. St'll there was no answer. He knocked again, louder. All was silence. Then, angry at the delay, wishing to bring matters to a crisis, he turned the handle, opened the door, and walked in.

Thought He Heard a Hurried Sound of Feet.

HE found himself in a small office, part of which was shut off by a wooden railing. Behind this were a couple of rolltop desks, a letterpress, a typewriter, a filing cabinet, and other ordinary pieces of cheap office furniture. There was nobody there, however, and so, seeing a door in one wall marked "Private," Fenton went through the gate, strode up to it, and knocked with determination.

Still no answer. He hesitated for a moment. It was carrying things rather far to force himself in this way; but he wanted to come to an end of the adventure as soon as possible. He knocked again; then, impatient at the silence, boldly opened the door.

He saw a carpeted room with a single rolltop desk and several chairs. Two of these were overturned, and between them, lying supine on the floor, was the body of a man, lying in a puddle of blood.

Fenton stood for a moment in the doorway, fascinated by the awfulness of it. He was unable to move. It seemed unreal, impossible, like a wild dream. His first impulse was to stifle his exclamation of alarm, shut the door, and make his escape as quietly and quickly as possible. Next, despite his sick feeling of horror, despite a dominant fancy that this thing was not, could not be, true, came the realization that he should go to the rescue of the man and give him aid, if it was not already too late. He forced his will to move his body, stepped forward, and knelt beside the form. One look into those open, staring eyeballs told him that the man was dead.

But, as he looked at the pale face more deliberately, horror gave way to pathos. The dead man was wonderfully beautiful, picturesque, even poetic. By his crisp, curling hair, the finely molded features, the width of his forehead, the small, delicate mustache, the body might have been that of Edgar Allan Poe. The skin was fair as a child's; the lips, sensitively parted, showed perfect teeth; the slender hands were like a woman's, gracefully expressive in their relaxed gesture. All tl.is would have prevented the corpse seeming dreadful, had not that oozing red spot on the shirt told a tale of murder. Fenton drew down the lids over the glassy eyeballs with scarcely a feeling of revulsion, and then slowly rose, still held by the potent fascination of death. Then his eyes wandered about the room, and stopped at a black leather bag some little distance away from the body. He walked over to it and picked it up. It was a flat bag, such as women use. He opened it, and the spell was broken by a new sensation.

The bag was filled with jewels! For the second time that night he was in possession of the Brewster collection. That fact decided him. Whatever had happened in this dreadful office, it was his plain duty to take the jewels and deliver them as he had promised. His own safety and theirs demanded that he make his escape without the slightest delay. There was no knowing when someone might come. It would be dangerous, disastrous, to be discovered there alone with the corpse.

Buttoning the bag under his coat, therefore, he gave one swift look at the dead man, and went out to the other office. Here he paused a moment to consider. It was improbable that any other exit than the front door of the building would at this time of night be open. The safest way, if indeed not the only way, would be to go boldly down the elevator, as he had come up. He must take his chance, at any rate. A glimpse into a mirror showed his face a deathly white. He took a towel from the washbowl and rubbed his cheeks violently, till the color had returned. If he could only efface the horror in his heart as easily! The image in his eyes had faded; so that, now the door was closed, he could hardly believe that what he had seen was true; but a feeling of faintness warned him that the shock had gone deep. He waited a moment for his weakness to pass, then, summoning all his resolution, left the office and rang the elevator bell.

He scarcely dared look at the elevator boy as the car descended. The air seemed close and stifling. Without a glance to right or left he walked unsteadily out the great doorway. On the sidewalk the night breeze revived him, and he started to walk briskly north along Broadway. At each step his courage and his relief increased. He shook off his obsession, pacified his conscience with the thought that there was nothing he could have done, and turned his thoughts to planning his next move in the curious game of chance that he seemed destined to play that night.

Here he was again with the Brewster treasure; but again without a cent in his pocket and now still farther away than ever from his destination. As he walked